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THE DEMOGRAPHIC IMPACT OF THE HOLOCAUST
ON THE JEWISH PEOPLE

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The Nazi mass murder of European Jewry reduced the number of Jews in the Old Continent from about nine and a half million on the eve of World War II to less than four million according to a rough estimate for mid-1948; this latter figure includes repatriates from the Asian territories of the USSR and those who would shortly leave Europe for the newly founded State of Israel. ⁽¹⁾ This constituted a decrease of more than five and a half million Jews in Europe - somewhat more than the corresponding decrease of about five million for the whole of World Jewry, which had numbered more than 16 million in 1939 and was still more than eleven million in 1948. The diminution of Jewry worldwide was smaller than in Europe, because of some natural increase that occurred outside that continent in the interval 1939-1948.

Actually, the devastating losses attributable to the Holocaust surpassed the figure of five and a half million since there had been a wave of Jewish births immediately after World War II, as part of the "baby boom" in all the developed countries. The boom was very conspicuous among the Holocaust survivors who sought to reconstitute truncated families and who comprised relatively high number of adults of reproductive age. Consequently, the direct losses of the Holocaust approached six million Jews lending support to the usually accepted magnitude of this disaster. Speaking very broadly, the Holocaust reduced the number of European Jews by about two thirds and World Jewry by about one third.

However, this is not the full picture, because of further, albeit indirect, demographic losses. The Holocaust consisted not only of gassing, slaughter and infliction of death through

starvation, other privations, exhaustion, and resultant diseases - but expressed itself also in a drastic reduction of Jewish births. Most populations grew at that time through natural increase. Had it not been for the Holocaust, larger Jewish populations in Europe and in the world could have been expected after the middle of the 1940s than in the late 1930s (see Appendix I).

Changes of Spatial Distribution

Two processes operated to this effect: the geographically differential impact of the Holocaust and those Jewish migrations, especially intercontinental or international ones, that were wholly or partly due to the Holocaust.

The Holocaust took place almost exclusively in Europe. A part of the Jews of Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia managed to escape in time, most of them leaving Europe. England and a few neutral states of Europe were not invaded. Of the countries occupied or dominated by the Nazis, the destruction of Jewish lives was greatest in Eastern Europe, with the exception of Romania and especially Bulgaria (as well as the unoccupied regions of the Soviet Union). '2' In continental Western Europe, Jewish losses were relatively heavier in Holland and Belgium than in France.

During the war years the intensity of Jewish migrations within Europe was quite extraordinary. Most Jews were on the move - and a great many repeatedly so - either seeking shelter or being transported to ghettos and camps. Only relatively few Jews managed to escape then from Europe, some by staying temporarily in Asian regions of the USSR.

However, soon after the war ended an exodus from Europe of Jewish survivors from Europe set in. Among the push-factors were the haunting memories of the Holocaust and dismal experiences of Jewish returnees (e.g. the Kielce pogrom). Among the pull-factors ranked foremost the frantic hope and eventual reality of a Jewish homeland in Eretz Israel, motivating first what was termed

"illegal immigration" by the British Mandatory authorities, and subsequently became the European share of the mass immigration in the earliest years of the State of Israel.

In consequence of the large-scale annihilation of European Jewry and the ensuing exodus from Europe, the relative distribution of the Jewish people according to continents of residence was radically changed. While the Americas had accounted for only a third of World Jewry before the Holocaust, they formed about a half afterwards. The share of Eretz Israel rose from less than three percent of the Jewish people before the Holocaust to approximately 12 percent by 1951, following the mass immigration to the newly founded Jewish State. ⁽³⁾ On the other hand the proportion of European among World Jewry dropped during 1939-1951 from nearly 60 to only 30 percent.

Even within Europe, considerable movements of Jews from the Eastern to the Western regions of the continent took place in the wake of the Holocaust. A large part of the post-Holocaust brihah (flight) soon moved on to Israel, while others settled in Western Europe. Instead of the previously flourishing Jewries of Central and East-Central Europe a void had been created. The Jewish survivors on that continent became geographically polarized - concentrating either in the USSR (and secondarily in Romania and Hungary) or else in France and England.

Neither were all these only geographical relocations. Actually they implied changed ethnic, linguistic, cultural, social and economic surroundings for the survivors and their offspring, leading to profound changes in the composition and characteristics of the remnants of European Jewry and of the Jewish people altogether. In particular the focus of the Diaspora shifted from the relatively backward setting of Eastern Europe, with its shtetl culture, to the USA that offered wide opportunities to Jews. Furthermore, Israel set out on its own course of statehood and development.

Changes in Age-Sex Distribution

The age-sex distributions of the afflicted Jewish populations were also greatly affected by the Holocaust. Children and old people, the age categories of smallest physical staying power, suffered most. Both the mass destruction of Jewish children and the paucity of births during the Holocaust caused specific and serious deficiencies in the birth-year composition of the surviving remnants of the Jewish populations. On the other hand, the lesser mortality of young adults made itself felt by their increased proportions among the survivors. 47 percent of the approximately 350,000 immigrants from Europe to the new State of Israel during 1948-1952 were then aged 20-44 years. At the time that the Holocaust had ended they had been even younger by several years. Moreover, children up to the age four formed fully ten percent in this computation; they should however be omitted, as having been mostly born after the Holocaust and under the completely altered conditions of the "baby boom". If so, the proportion of 20-44 year old immigrants from Europe to Israel during 1948-1952 rises to 52 percent.

The especially heavy losses of elderly people along with the large share of young adults among the immediate survivors caused severe departures from an ordinary, far more evenly-spread age distribution. It could not fail to have its economic, social and Jewish-cultural effects. For some time the large proportion of young and, as the years advanced, of middle-aged persons probably caused enhanced representation of the survivors in the labor force and may have assisted their economic recuperation. Of late, forty years or so after the Holocaust, those who once were young adults are swelling the ranks of Jewish elderly with concomitant effects on the Jewish populations of their countries of residence.

Sex-differential and sex-age-differential losses of Jewish lives during the Holocaust seem however to have been irregular, depending on the particular fate of the Jewish group afflicted. In the Diaspora, the resulting age-sex imbalances may have sometimes

operated as a demographic incentive to outmarriage by surviving Jews.

Despite incontestable great changes brought about by the Holocaust some continuity of basic demographic peculiarities and trends of the Jews exists and will be analyzed in the following sections.

Features of Partial Demographic Continuity

Modern Demographic Trends

In order to understand the evolution of Jewish populations in the pre-Holocaust and post-Holocaust periods, and its relationship to the general demographic evolution of the developed countries, it is necessary to briefly characterize the latter.

a. Some principal modern trends of population structure have been the following: urbanization and especially the formation of large metropolitan areas; great progress in formal education; occupational changes of the labor force associated with transformations in the economy, such as growing shares of commerce and services as well as of managerial tasks; aging of populations.

b. Regarding demographic dynamics: continual mortality reduction; but also strong limitation of fertility and of the rates of births and natural increase, assisted by innovations in contraceptive techniques; of late, decreasing propensity and stability of marriage (i.e., rise of divorce); therefore declining - and by now even negative - prospects of intergenerational replacement.

c. In our times, the aging of populations is chiefly determined by prolonged low fertility. Demographic aging, in turn, impairs the balance of natural movement and the prospects of intergenerational replacement, since elderly people have fewer children and die much more frequently than younger adults.

d. Decline of fertility and replacement can go hand in hand with notable socioeconomic success. In recent years the fertility of most of the economically very advanced nations, including the USA, has been below intergenerational replacement requirements; and the current balance of natural movement in Germany, despite that country's economic lead in Europe, has been outrightly negative (deaths outnumbering births).

e. The modern evolution of populations - by now gradually extending, at least in part, from the developed countries to most of mankind - is viewed by demographers as largely consisting of a transition from traditional to the above-outlined novel patterns.

f. While rather low natural increase (or possibly decrease) is likely to continue in the developed countries, its actual level - below minimal replacement needs, as at present, or perhaps somewhat above - had cautiously best be considered as an open issue which only the empirical future will decide.

Jews and Demographic Modernity '4'

In briefest outline it may be stated that in most of the above respects the Jews of the developed Diaspora countries have both preceded and exceeded their host population. For historical reasons the Jews have had a long record of urban or semi-urban residence, of concentration in non-manual occupations as well as of intellectual training, though the latter was in the past primarily of a religious character and beneficial to men rather than to women. Further, the Jews have preceded and outdone the corresponding general populations in the reduction first of mortality and then of fertility, and consequently in attaining low or negative rates of natural increase and intergenerational replacement.

In the twentieth century essential synchronization has prevailed between the Diaspora '5' and the general populations of the developed countries in the timing - though not the intensity -

of the major phases in the evolution of fertility and natural increase: a prolonged downward trend during the first decades of this century, eventually exacerbated by the economic recession of the 1930s and World War II; a "baby boom" after the war; and a drastic fertility shrinkage in recent decades. As stated, the latter was connected with changes in nuptiality and divorce patterns, and innovations in contraceptive techniques.

Besides, nearly everywhere in the Diaspora the Jews are now but relatively small subpopulations, mostly living in the midst of largely secularized and "open" societies. As such they are exposed to the demographic challenges of assimilation and, in particular, of outmarriage. According to the fragmentary evidence available, outmarriages of Jews are frequent in the Diaspora today and consist increasingly of non-conversionary, overtly mixed unions the majority of whose offspring are not raised as Jews. This adds another factor of demographic attrition for the contemporary Diaspora: very low fertility, intensive aging as well as net losses through assimilation. It also necessitates a conceptual distinction between entire fertility (or, respectively, natural increase) in the Diaspora and its effectively Jewish scope - excluding those children of Jewish parentage who are not raised as Jews.

Moreover, the immigrations of Jews may not necessarily be a long-term remedy against negative trends of natural movement and of the assimilatory balance among the communities of destination. In the global context of World Jewry, migrations are initially no more than internal transfers (only in the longer run they may lead to changed subsequent evolution). In a specific country of destination they will be no help in the long run against eventual decrease in the number of Jews, if the above-mentioned internal trends continue to be negative and demographically fritter away the migratory reinforcement.

The Holocaust and Demographic Modernization Trends among the Jews

Consideration of these relationships requires some geocultural distinctions.

Eastern Europe

In the decades prior to the Holocaust, East European Jewry (including the Balkans), which then constituted the largest segment of the Jewish people, was undergoing a rapid transition from comparatively traditional to modern patterns. This applied not only to the spiritual and intellectual spheres but also to demographic aspects. Concentration in larger cities and the level of secular education increased, notable occupational shifts occurred towards more modern branches of the economy or more modern types of activity in branches customary among Jews. Mortality among the Jews continued to decline rapidly, boosting their natural increase up to a certain stage, although this increase slowed down later owing to the accelerated decline in fertility and the birth rate. During the period of greatest natural increase, which lasted until the beginning of our century, the East European Jews experienced strong economic pressures due to their natural increase. These were among the underlying determinants of mass emigration to the west, especially to the United States. Eventually, however, migration was largely barred: first by restrictive American legislation concerning immigration and then by a virtual ban on exits from the Soviet Union. The curtailment of the migratory outlet must have enhanced the economic motivation for demographic modernization in terms of birth control.

The establishment of the communist regime in what became the Soviet Union had far-reaching consequences for the Jews. For several decades until the end of World War II it divided the Jews into two sections, those inside and outside the USSR. Within the Soviet Union freedom of movement was granted to the Jews, large numbers of whom left the "Pale of settlement" of Czarist times -

with its many shtetls and specific traditional culture - and moved to the largest and fast modernizing cities. New social, educational and occupational opportunities were opened to them but they were also exposed to cultural assimilation including secularization, low fertility trends and outmarriage. Besides, they did not fail to share the hardships of the general population during the 1920s and '30s. In Eastern Europe outside the Soviet Union the trends of demographic modernization operated more gradually but also there the cumulative effects on the Jews became increasingly significant. In the 1930s, the economic recession, repressive and more or less overtly antisemitic regimes, and the spreading shadows cast by Nazi Germany led, on the whole, to lower fertility and aging tendencies among the Jews, notwithstanding the continued existence among them of traditional sectors with high reproduction. According to official statistics, the natural increase of the Jews in Poland had already dropped below one percent annually by the first half of the 1930s and reached one per thousand - virtually zero population growth - in Romania during the years 1936-1938.

The Holocaust then exterminated physically the vast majority of East European Jewry. It was followed by the communist takeover in the Soviet satellite states. After the creation of Israel, most survivors outside the now enlarged territory of the USSR left Eastern Europe altogether, migrating primarily to the Jewish State. These major upheavals swept away the previously subsisting nuclei of traditionalism, both spiritual and socio-demographic, among East European Jewry.

In recent decades, a short-lived "baby boom" directly after World War II was followed by very low Jewish fertility; 'e' a birth rate insufficient to balance deaths; consequent natural decrease; very strong aging; and high levels of outmarriage, especially in the Soviet satellite countries. To give just two illustrations of the extent of the aging process, which, as already explained, has implications for natural increase/decrease: the Soviet population census of 1970 reported for the Jews of the

Russian Republic (RSFSR), who then officially numbered 800,000, that only seven percent were in the ages 0-10 as against 16 percent aged 50-59 and 26 percent aged 60 and over. The Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania reported in 1979 (that is, after the majority of Jews had emigrated, particularly to Israel), 40 percent who were aged 66 and above.

Comparing the present demographic situation with that at the beginning of our century, East European Jewry - or rather what is left of it - has moved from the top to a very low position in the ranking of European-American Jewish populations concerning levels of growth or decrease, while undergoing an opposite change (from low to high) with regard to demographic aging.

If one were to hypothesize about the demographic evolution of East European Jewry had the Holocaust not occurred, it seems probable that these communities would in any event have moved in the direction of reduced fertility, aging and intensified outmarriage, though probably more slowly and to a lesser degree than actually happened after the Holocaust and largely as a result of that catastrophe. This hypothesis seems likely given: The corresponding fertility and aging trends in recent decades among the general populations throughout the developed countries, including Eastern Europe, as well as among the whole of Diaspora Jewry, (accompanied as it is among the Jews by rising outmarriage). Such demographic adaptability was already displayed by East European Jewry itself as early as the 1930s.

Central Europe

The other major branch of pre-Holocaust European Jewry lived mainly in the center of that continent - in Germany, in Austria (within its reduced borders after World War I), the western parts of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Italy. German Jewry was the largest and best documented. In all these countries the Jewish populations were reinforced by contingents of the large exodus from Eastern Europe at the turn of the 19th century. The majority of these

arrivals were undergoing rapid acculturation, with its demographic implications, before the era of the Holocaust.

Central European Jewry prominently displayed, at a comparatively early period, advanced stages of demographic modernization as characterized above: structurally it exhibited high urbanization and educational attainments, concentration in the tertiary sector of the economy (commerce and services) or in modern types of production, with a growing proportion of persons in managerial positions or the liberal professions; its demographic dynamics gave early evidence of very low Jewish fertility, rapid aging and considerable outmarriage. Central European Jewry approached zero population growth already prior to World War I. It arrived at a negative current growth (yearly deaths outnumbering yearly births) throughout the whole region as early as the middle of the 1920s - that is clearly before the onset of the great economic crisis and the seizure of power in Germany by the Nazis. Indifference to Jewishness and estrangement were widespread; outmarriages were growing rapidly. In all these respects no less than with regard to its conspicuous socio-economic rise and cultural success, Central European Jewry prior to the 1930s anticipated the demographic situation now prevailing throughout the Diaspora and especially in the Western countries - of course, in a different era and under historically very different circumstances.

Central European Jewry was destroyed through Nazi extermination, forced emigration and the dispersion of the survivors. But since its demographic characteristics still continue to manifest themselves in the Diaspora on a pervasive scale, one can find here a typological continuity, as distinct from physical and/or geographical continuity.

Western Countries

In the mid-19th century the Jewish populations both of the West European countries and outside the Old World were rather small and assimilated to their surroundings, by the turn of the

19th century they were being transformed by a large influx of East European Jews. The newcomers, who brought with them the traditionalism still extant in their regions of origin, initially retarded the overall socio-demographic evolution of the Western Jewries. Subsequently, in particular after World War I, they became increasingly integrated and participated intensively in the processes we have characterized as modern - continuing to do so ever since. With the exception of the Jewish populations of Holland, Belgium and partly that of France, they also were spared Nazi extermination and therefor preserved physical continuity. The question arises whether the typological continuity of the modern socio-demographic trends among them was actually affected by the Holocaust, and if so - to what effect. It seems plausible that some Western Jews who lived during the Holocaust period outside the Nazi grip, assimilated faster to their non-Jewish surroundings, and displayed higher outmarriage, than might otherwise been the case; among other Western Jews, on the contrary, the conscious resolve to maintain their Jewishness may have been strengthened. However, this must remain hypothetical in the absence of hard data from comprehensive investigations.

From 1939 to 1989 and Beyond

In 1939 the Jewish people was socio-demographically more variegated than it appears at present. Besides the three geo-cultural and demographic types already outlined - those in Eastern Europe, Central Europe and in the Western countries - it comprised the still very traditional Jews in the Islamic countries of Asia and North Africa as well as the budding Jewish community of Eretz Israel. However, the latter, though endowed with the capacity for considerable growth as the future would show, amounted to merely three percent of World Jewry by 1939. At that time it was primarily composed of East European Jews who were experiencing rapid fertility reduction in the 1930s. Yet, the age

composition of the "pioneers" was unusually youthful, the result being considerable natural increase even in that period.

The Holocaust virtually liquidated Central European Jewry and severely diminished that of Eastern Europe. Almost all Jews abandoned the Islamic countries and their great majority has been ingathered in Israel. Today only two major socio-demographic types stand out in World Jewry, one characteristic of the Diaspora and the other of Israel. The Jewish populations remaining in the Diaspora - which still constitute a majority of the Jewish people (about two thirds by 1991) - are remarkably similar in their demographic features especially with regards to the trends operating among them. They all manifest advanced urbanization and educational attainments, modern occupational profiles, very low fertility and tendencies toward natural decrease, aging, and intensified assimilation associated with outmarriage. Nor are these commonalities surprising, for those very features (including intergroup marriages of various kinds) are now also common to the non-Jewish populations of the highly developed countries in which nearly all Diaspora Jews live. From the socio-evolutionary viewpoint it can be stated that most Jews remaining in the Diaspora are descendants, at a remove of two to four generations, of the historical Jewry of Eastern Europe.

The Jews living in Israel also constitute a structurally modern population but their nuptiality and especially their fertility patterns stand in sharp contrast to those among Diaspora Jewry and indeed among the other developed countries in the contemporary world. Though they share with others a very low mortality, their propensity to marriage and the stability of their marriages have so far been greater. Moreover they manifest considerable fertility and natural increase well above replacement needs, thus permitting natural growth regardless of the external migration balance. In this crucial respect for future population prospects they differ from the other developed nations and - with even greater differentials - from all major Diaspora communities. Unlike the latter, they are not handicapped by frequent

outmarriages and net assimilatory losses. More interesting still, common demographic features are shared at present not only by the various, often very distant Diaspora communities, but also by the several ethnic-origin groups within Israel's composite Jewish population. Thus, Jews of European-American and Asian-African origins in Israel generally share today a common demographic profile '7' which clearly differs from that prevailing in the Diaspora. Gone are the striking differentials in mortality levels, marriage patterns and fertility that obtruded themselves in the 1950s, after the mass aliyah in the early years of the State. In all these respects, an astonishing degree of uniformity has been reached between the major origin groups of Jews in Israel. This applies also to the marked wish for future children, i.e. to fertility expectations. '8' The substantial level of those expectations and the basic difference between having majority status in Israel as against minority status with contingent assimilatory losses in the Diaspora, are certain to perpetuate the demographic disparities between Israel and the Diaspora for decades to come. In fact, the only major sector of Jews that clearly deviates demographically from the general pattern in Israel are the ultra-orthodox, whose fertility far surpasses that of the rest. '9' It is true that even in Israel Jews are still considerably surpassed in fertility by their Arab neighbors; however, Arab fertility has gone down remarkably during recent decades and is now below that of the ultra-orthodox minority among Israel's Jewish population.

The existence of a considerable fertility level among Israeli Jews is abundantly and consistently documented. However, its causation, which is certainly complex, is far from being satisfactorily explained. In the context of this article the question inevitably arises: has the unforgettable trauma of the Holocaust had any effect, among other determinants, especially on the Jews of European origin, who have raised their fertility in Israel, whereas the Asian-African Jews have reduced theirs. The

question deserves to be posed but in the absence of hard evidence, it cannot be answered on the empirical level.

One of the recurrent and arresting features in the long history of the Jews is their resilience following major crises. On the national level this can be followed over millenia: after each of the many calamities which have befallen this ancient people in the course of history, its remnants - often after great losses, physical and/or identificational - have rallied again for a phase of renewed vitality. Even after the catastrophe of the Holocaust which might have disheartened others, the Jews have impressively displayed this age-old capacity for recovery both in the establishment and defence of the State of Israel and in the spectacular socio-economic rise of Jewish individuals - indeed entire communities - in the Western World today, particularly in the United States. With regarding to the Diaspora, however, it should be firmly realized that socio-economic success and the consequent sense of gratification are under current conditions no guarantee, in demographic terms, for reproductive replacement or for a positive net balance of assimilatory shifts between a minority group, like the Jews, and the "open", receptive majority populations.

The estimated size of World Jewry which was more than sixteen million prior to the Holocaust, has hovered somewhat below thirteen million during recent years, in a state of virtually zero population growth. This recent situation has been the net result of two opposite tendencies: numerical decrease in the Diaspora was counterbalanced by growth in Israel. However, the natural increase of Israel's Jews will not be able to balance much longer the intensifying shrinkage of the Diaspora due to the fertility crisis, aging, and assimilatory losses. Strong aliyah, such as the recent wave from the Soviet Union, further accentuates the disparate trends in the Diaspora and in Israel. (10) The inevitable consequence will be a continuing diminution of the World Jewish population, as illustrated by demographic projections in Appendix II. The final point I wish to make is that there is no

hope of recovering in the foreseeable future the pre-Holocaust size of World Jewry. Moreover, the relative magnitude of World Jewry is on the decrease vis-a-vis the still ongoing slow growth of most developed nations and especially the population explosion elsewhere, including in most Arab states. This brings us back to our starting point - the truncation of the Jewish people that was indeed wrought by the Holocaust.

Appendix I. Estimation of Holocaust Losses

It is futile to attempt to establish the total of direct losses by compiling and summing up information on camp inmates, transports of designated victims "to the east", etc. This is due to the obvious incompleteness of the available sources (there are also duplications among them). ^{'11'}

A demographic method for trying to assess fully the extent of direct as well as narrowly indirect losses - that is, of deaths inflicted and births missed ^{'12'} - might be computation of the difference between the estimated actual number of Jews in Europe on the eve of the Holocaust and a hypothetical expected number soon after the end of World War II, had the Holocaust had not taken place. In order to arrive at such a hypothetical number, a method analogous to population projections ought to be used. Census data or the best estimates obtainable from the 1930s for the Jews in the various European countries should first be updated to a common baseline as of autumn 1939. Starting from that basis the probable net natural increase (or decrease) under "normal conditions" should be accounted for until soon after the end of World War II. ^{'13'} Migrations of Jews during the Holocaust period between Europe and other continents should also be taken into account.

Yet, such an undertaking would encounter, apart from deficiencies of sources, the major difficulty of establishing levels of "normal" natural increase (or decrease) of the Jews in the various

European countries before and during the war years. In fact, the empirical data from the 1930s document a strongly downward trend of fertility among the general populations of the developed countries. For the Jews in Europe this trend was compounded with the intensifying implications, direct and indirect, of the Nazi persecutions. These demographic implications can, however, be viewed as anticipatory symptoms of the eventual Holocaust, whose influence this model is precisely intended to eliminate; therefore, they should be discounted insofar as possible. On the other hand, the post-war data can be of no help, since they reflect a completely changed situation: a "baby boom" was then sweeping the developed countries, including their Jewish residents; besides the age composition of those Jews who survived had been drastically altered as a result of the Holocaust itself. Under these complicated circumstances use of considerably differing alternative assumptions concerning the evolution of the various Jewish populations of Europe in the absence of the Holocaust would be inevitable. This in turn must lead to a considerable range of differing results for the hypothetical size of Europe's Jewish populations if the Holocaust had not taken place, intensifying the problematic character of such results. This laborious task has not yet been undertaken.

Appendix II. Estimates and Projections of World Jewish Population

The current estimates co-authored by me relate ideationally to the "core Jewish populations" - i.e. those persons who, if questioned in a census or survey, are reported as Jews (for whatever reason: religious, ethnic, cultural etc.). The estimates for the end of 1989 were as follows: World Jewry - 12,810,000; Diaspora - 9,093,000, and Israel - 3,717,000. ⁽¹⁴⁾ These figures were arrived at after correcting US Jewry by nearly 200,000 downwards according to the results of the National Jewish Population Survey of 1990-1991 (we had explained in many previous

publications that a reduction seemed indicated but its actual calibration should await the results of that meanwhile conducted national survey). ⁽¹⁵⁾

Demographic projections do not pretend to be prophecies. They merely show the numerical results if a population of given size and composition evolves according to defined assumptions regarding the various factors of change (natural, migratory, identificational). Because of this conjectural character, it is usual to present alternative versions of projections (medium, high, low, etc.). ⁽¹⁶⁾ Elaborate projections are computed age-sex-specifically.

Projections of World Jewry, by major geographical regions, were published by me, based on empirical observation of trends in the preceding years. ⁽¹⁷⁾ According to the medium variant of these projections, World Jewry, which was estimated at roughly 13.0 million in 1975, would be reduced to 12.4 million in the year 2000 and would shrink further to 12.0 million by 2010. The above-mentioned downward correction for US Jewry according to the recent survey conducted there, diminishes the figures to approximately 12.2 and 11.8 million in the years 2000 and 2010, respectively. These figures quantify the wide gap vis-a-vis the estimate of more than 16 million Jews in the world before the Holocaust. They also indicate that this gap is not narrowing in our times but actually increasing.

Finally, the proportion of Israel among World Jewry is increasing. It amounted to about 23 percent in 1975. At the end of 1989 it had grown to 29 percent and by the middle of 1991 it approached 32 percent, owing to both the demographic growth of Israel's Jews and the decrease of the Diaspora. Each of these trends has been intensified by the recent migration wave from the Soviet Union to Israel. ⁽¹⁸⁾ Furthermore, these trends will continue in the decades to come. Inversely, if Israel's Jews had behaved or would behave demographically like those of the Diaspora, the discrepancy with the pre-Holocaust size of World Jewry would even be augmented.

Notes

The editorial assistance of R. Wistrich and M. Goodman is gratefully acknowledged.

1. Author's figures, based on estimates of the number of Jews in all countries; see also Ruppin (1946).
2. There too mortality was aggravated by wartime conditions.
3. The mass immigration to Israel at that time originated not only from Europe but also from the Islamic countries of Asia and North Africa. Entry to the USA remained virtually barred for Holocaust survivors during the immediate post-war years.
4. Bachi (1976); Schmelz (1981a and b, 1984, 1989a); Schmelz and DellaPergola (1988); DellaPergola and Schmelz (1989).
5. The Jews of Israel have behaved differently in recent decades regarding fertility and natural increase (see below).
6. Further reduced by loss of children through outmarriages.
7. Schmelz, DellaPergola, Avner (1990-1991).
8. Peritz (in press).
9. Schmelz (1989b).
10. Aliyah reduces the number of Diaspora Jews and increases that of Israeli Jews. In the short run, however, it is immaterial for the overall size of World Jewry since it consists of no more than geographical shifts. In the longer run, it may affect the size of World Jewry - when the olim adapt themselves to the demographic climate of Israel (virtual

absence of outmarriage, greater fertility) and thus evolve demographically otherwise than they would have done in the Diaspora.

11. For a recent and comprehensive analysis of the available material see Benz (1991).
12. Accounting among others for children who both were born and died during the Holocaust years; also accounting for Jews whose health was so gravely impaired by the Holocaust conditions that they passed away within the first few months after the end of hostilities in Europe.
13. See second part of preceding note.
14. In 1991 the Jewish population of Israel passed the four million mark, mainly as a result of the influx of Soviet Jews.
15. Schmelz and DellaPergola (1991). Jewish population estimates (with some evaluations) for all the countries of the world have been published by these authors in the American Jewish Year Book since 1982.
16. A difficulty in formulating realistic assumptions, especially for Jewish populations, arises from irregularity of migrations - as illustrated by the strongly varying volume and direction of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union since the beginning of the 1970s.
17. Schmelz (1981b and 1989a).
18. The above-mentioned downward correction of the estimated size of US Jewry operated to the same effect.

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